

The SL Arts and Life Magazine

Year 12

December 2011

Edward Kyomoon
with
Traci Nubalo
Desdemona
Enfield
and
Douglas
Story

Wuffle
Notes

Bravo
Red
fiction



ROBRAILES

Happy Christmas!
with love
Sonatka M
#8*



Editor's Note

december

Deningun Parte:Editor

Dear Readers,

Life has a way of bringing good things our way, if only we are open to them. Especially in SL, I have often faced situations where I wish I knew someone with a specific skill to help me out with something, or someone who possessed some other unique quality. Usually I feel stuck then, until I take some time to let my mind wander. It is then that I realize that I knew the people I need all along. The rez team has two such members, one who's been with us for a while and a new one. When we first set up a vendor network, we needed someone with the technical skill to oversee the inworld distribution of Intelli-books. None of the founding members of the rez team knew enough to do it. I remember struggling with this for a time, until it occurred to me, plain as day, that my landlady Stacey Rome deals with vendor networks and enjoys the gadgetry. A few short IMs later, rez had a distribution manager. If you get rez out of an indworld vendor, it's thanks to Stacey.

That same scenario repeated itself just a few short weeks ago. I was wishing I knew a columnist with an edge, an original way of seeing things with a piercing sense of humor. That is a tall order: who knows someone like that? It turns out, I did. My friend Wuffle can make my day with a single line in chat. I often laughed loud and long, wishing she would write more. And now I am ever so glad that she did write more. This issue carries the first installment of

“Wuffle Notes,” observations of what is, or might be possible in SL. Well, that is if you ride motorcycles, and don’t see the point in certain types of undergarments! Better read for yourself though.

In her column *The Girl Opines*, Jullianna Juliesse reflects on questionable behaviors in SL, how people attack each other’s reputation, and make each other’s lives needlessly difficult. And in *Plan B*, I ponder the effect of societal convention and the pressure of expectations, asking the question of how free we really are in a world that affords us total freedom.

In another lucky twist of fate, I met Desdemona Enfield through a mutual friend, and was given the tour of the installations Desdemona built together with her creative partner Douglas Story. From these informal encounters developed this month’s cover story on an enduring creative partnership that produces some of the most truly indigenous SL art I know. Music critic Traci Nubalo spent a lot of time this month following guitarist Edward Kyomoon, covering his music, performances and the nuts and bolts of his success in SL. Our final contribution on the arts is Cat Boccaccio’s set of 14 leading questions, which she put to artist, fashion designer, builder and political activist, Trill Zapatero.

Jami Mills has once again transcended the realm of photography, and contributed a short story, entitled *Bravo Red*. I may have left the very best for last. I pushed the publication of Jullianna Juliesse’s Poem “You Shall Never Touch Me Again” back by at least a month, because I was so moved by it. I wanted to make sure that it would be the only poem in the issue. If it had to compete for attention with another one, both poems would have lost. Enjoy!

Deningun Parte, Editor in Chief

Godesses of SL Art Calendar 2012

CAT BOCCACCIO, PHOTOGRAPHER

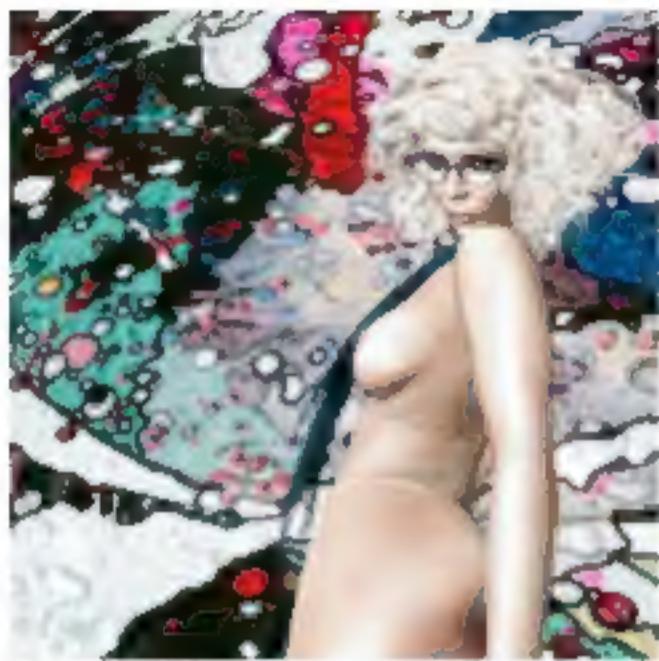
**This calendar is a tribute to 12 of the most
talented, intriguing and beautiful women
in the Second Life art world.**

**In a collaboration between model and
photographer, the model's own work or
favorite art piece was selected as backdrop.**

**ALL PROCEEDS FROM THIS
CALENDAR GO DIRECTLY TO
"THE HUNGER PROJECT"**

<http://www.thp.org>

**Available at the Seaside Gallery,
Cat's Beach Gallery
and other inworld locations.**





Cat Questionnaire: **Trill Zapatero**

Cat Boccaccio:Interrogator

Artist Activist Trill Zapatero is bold enough to answer Cat's 14 leading questions.

SL age: 3 years

SL activity: fashion, arts, activism

RL location: Canada

In-your-own-words bio: Owner and designer of BoHo HoBo fashions, artist, builder and activist for the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), which funds education, healthcare and orphanages.

1. What in SL has brought you the most happiness?

Talking to people, meeting awesome people from all over the world.

2. What has given you the most sadness?

Same things that make me sad in RL - things that people do and say that make me feel hopeless about the world. (but this is hardly ever).

3. How would you describe your home in SL?

No home, just places to work.



4. Who in SL do you admire most?

I admire a lot of people, Medora Chevelier for her work with Peacefest, Filthy Fluno for his Artathons.

5. What character trait do you have in SL that is furthest from your RL personality?

I'm not sure I have any SL traits that I don't have in RL.

6. Which character trait did you leave behind in RL?

It's easier to not be afraid of people in SL because you can TP away if they bother you.
LOL

7. What is your weakness when it comes to spending your Linden dollars?

Sculpts.

8. What is your favorite place in Second Life, and why?

My place, my work platform.

9. What scares you the most in (or about) Second Life?

I guess I get afraid and worried when I see selfish or greedy behaviour, especially in otherwise awesome people. Makes me scared that I'm the same way.

10. What is your secret pleasure in SL?

Don't think I have any secret pleasures.

11. What would it take to drive you out of Second Life?

I don't know. So far I have no idea about that. I guess if I lost all my friends.

12. What one word would you use to describe the art community in SL?

Dynamic.

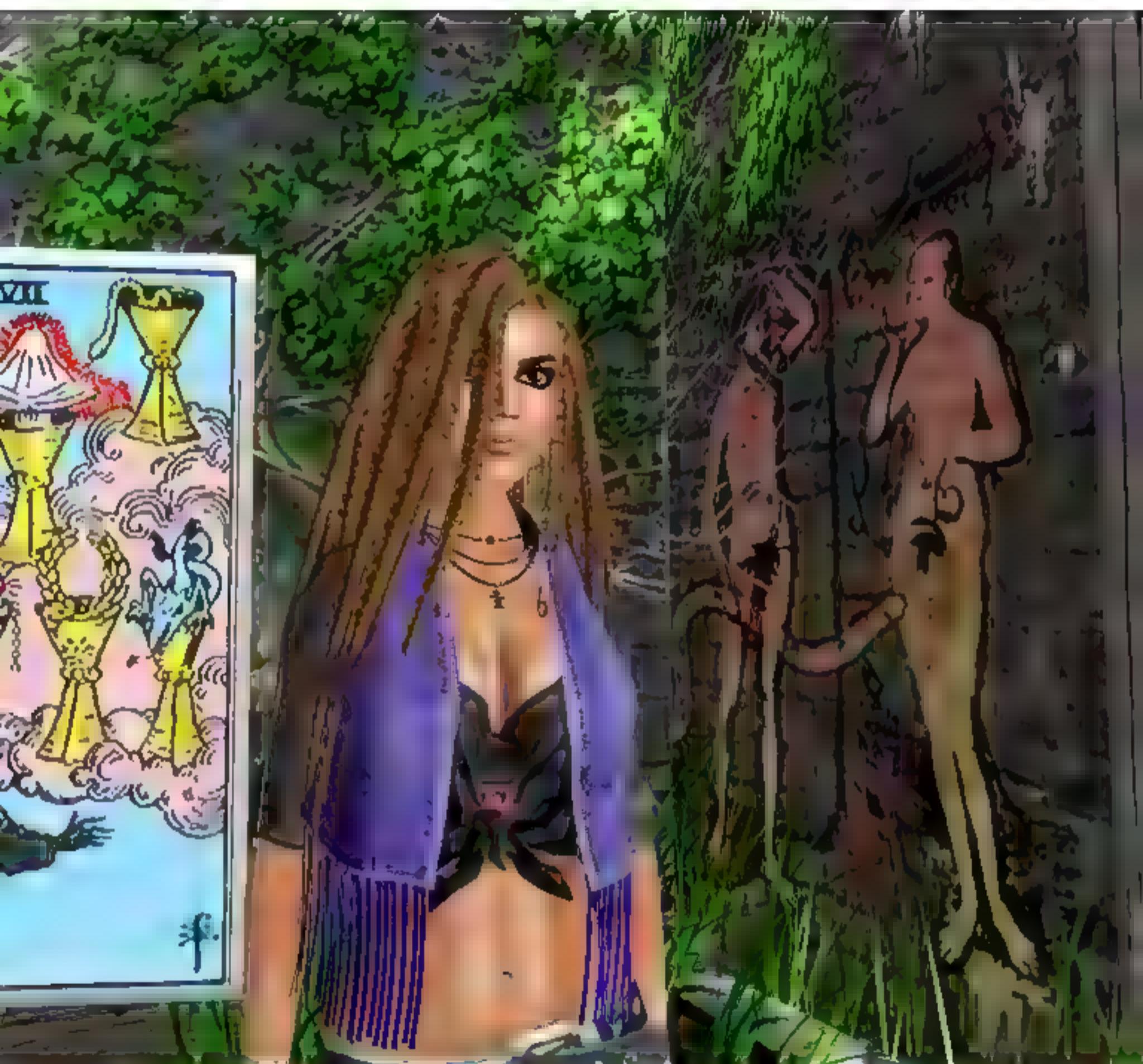
13. What are you most proud of in SL?

My Grailquest project. [accessible from the Virtual Museum]

14. If you built a sim from scratch with unlimited resources, what would it be called?

Ummmm ah.... it would be some kind of adventure sim, like a treasure hunt of some kind, but not sure what I would call it!





Visit the Afghanistan Virtual Museum for more information about RAWA.
<http://afghanistanvirtualmuseum.com>

See some of Trill's trendy and colorful designer fashions and get the link to the shop on the BoHo Hobo blog:
<http://slbohohobo.wordpress.com/>



Why I Was Followed by Bored Little Moons:

The Installations of Desdemona Enfield and Douglas Story

by Deningun Parte
photos by Jami Mills

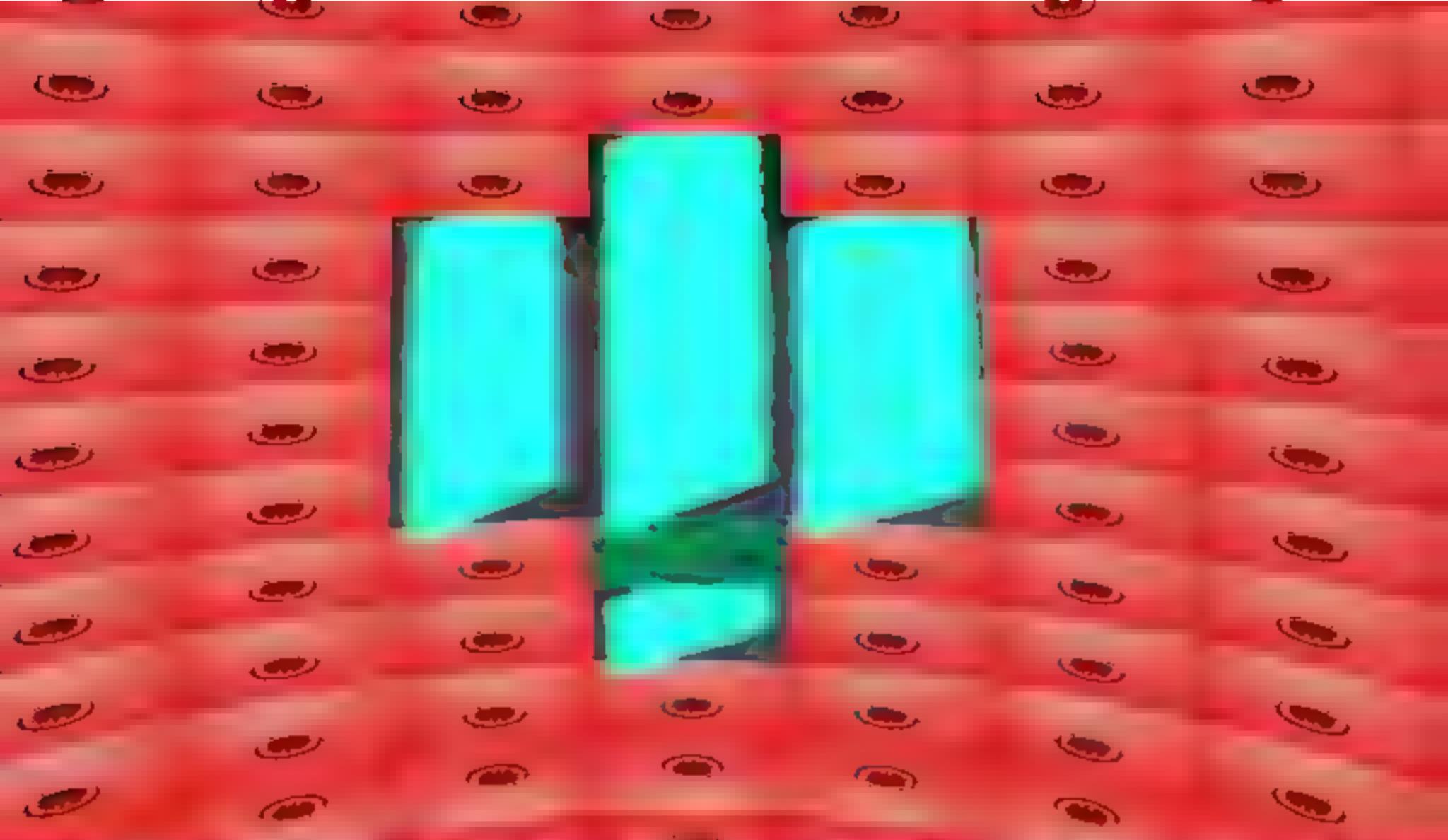
In a manner of speaking, it took me the better part of a year to get to where I could write this article. Back then, I was asked to help put together an exhibit of "SL Art", for a gallery in RL Manhattan. I was skeptical on several grounds, mostly because I was uneasy with the term "SL Art". What would that mean?



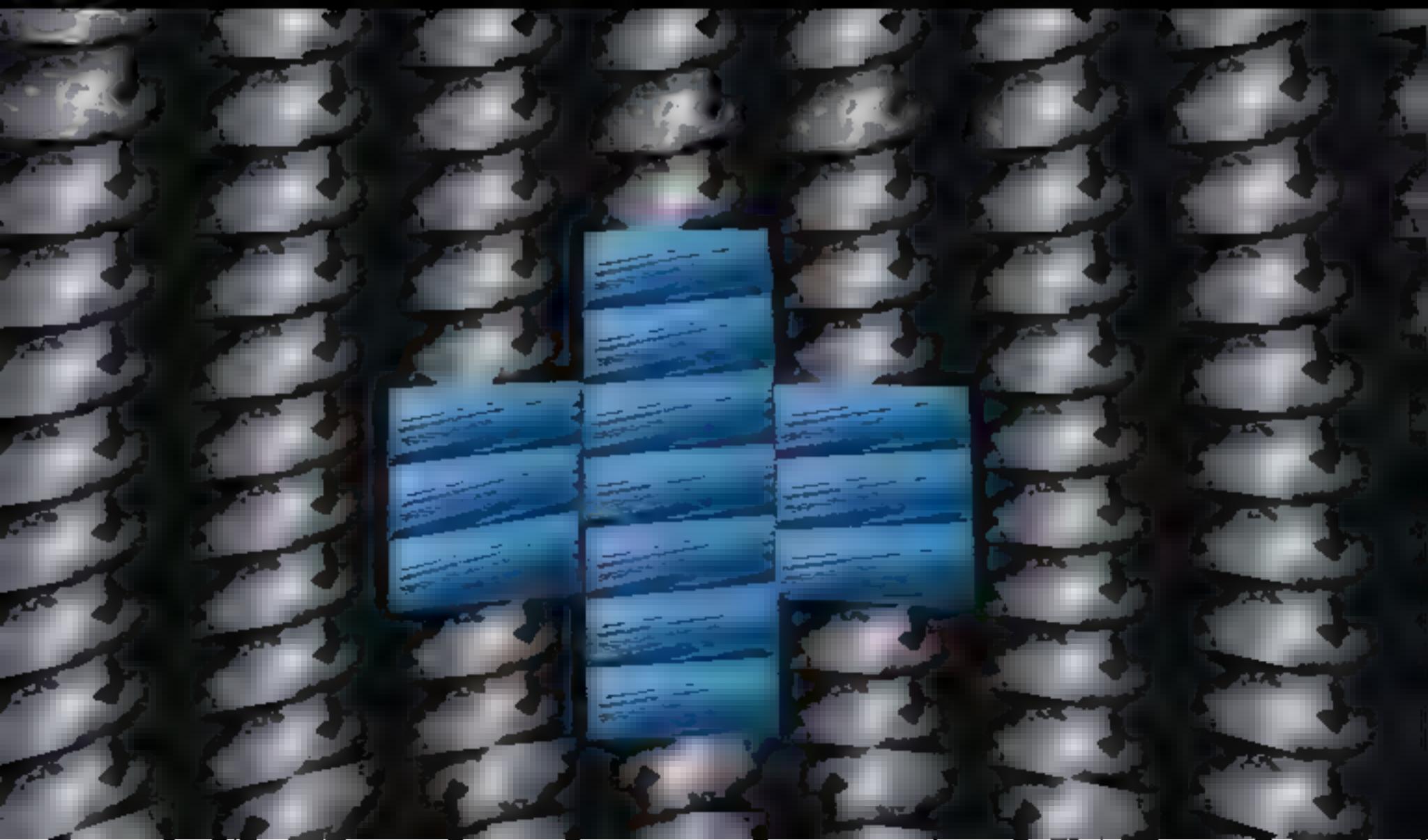
Art that exists here often is simply imported from RL, exporting it back is meaningless. Art that is created here? That works for SL photography, but outside of SL it ends up being nothing but another way of creating a digital image. Moreover, I thought the main point of SL imagery would be lost; namely, walking through a virtual gallery to see the images. What other forms of fine art are there in SL? Obviously, sculptures and builds. But those do not transfer to RL at all; the main point, immersion, is lost. In a gallery in New York City, how do you appreciate something that was created in a virtual space, for a virtual space? Simple. You set up computers and allow people to see things in SL. And there goes the entire point of the RL exhibit. You do not have to physically be anywhere in particular to enjoy an immersive SL build. All you need is a computer and an Internet connection. This train of thought, and the heated debates that go along with it, raised my interest in large interactive builds as the truly indigenous SL art form SL.



I wish I could say I sat down, did my homework, found out where the good builds were and then, after weighing which were good and which were better, and come to you and tell you what impressed me most. But life happens differently. OK - mine does. It wasn't until several months later that I was introduced to Desdemona Enfield through a mutual friend. I got to tour several of the exhibits she made with her collaborator, Douglas Story.



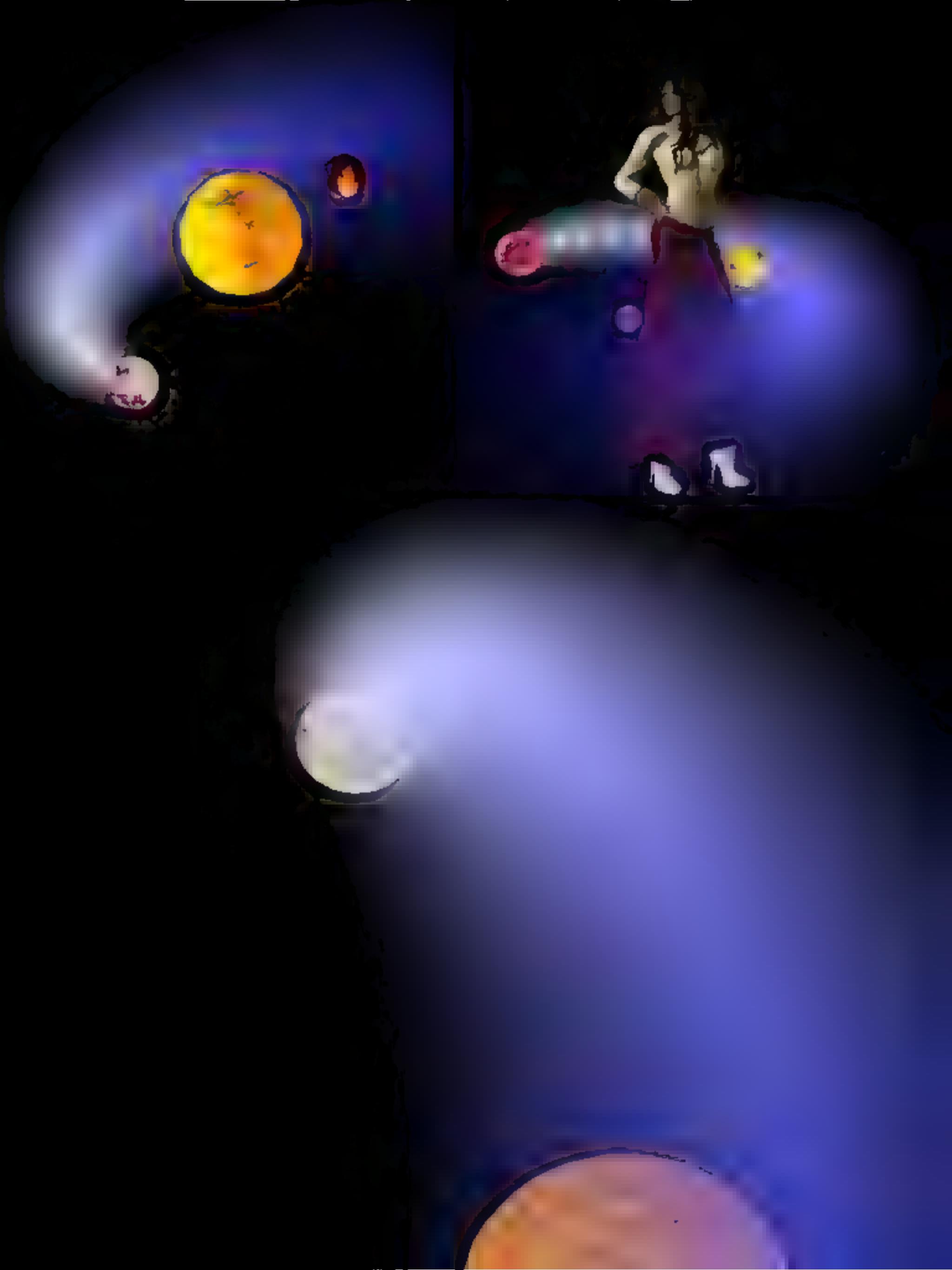
First was Ripple, which puts you inside a dome of changing animated patterns. The changes start in one location, then spread outward over the surface of the dome, all accompanied by matching audio effects. The experience is so hypnotic that we spent considerable time in the dome. I have come back since,

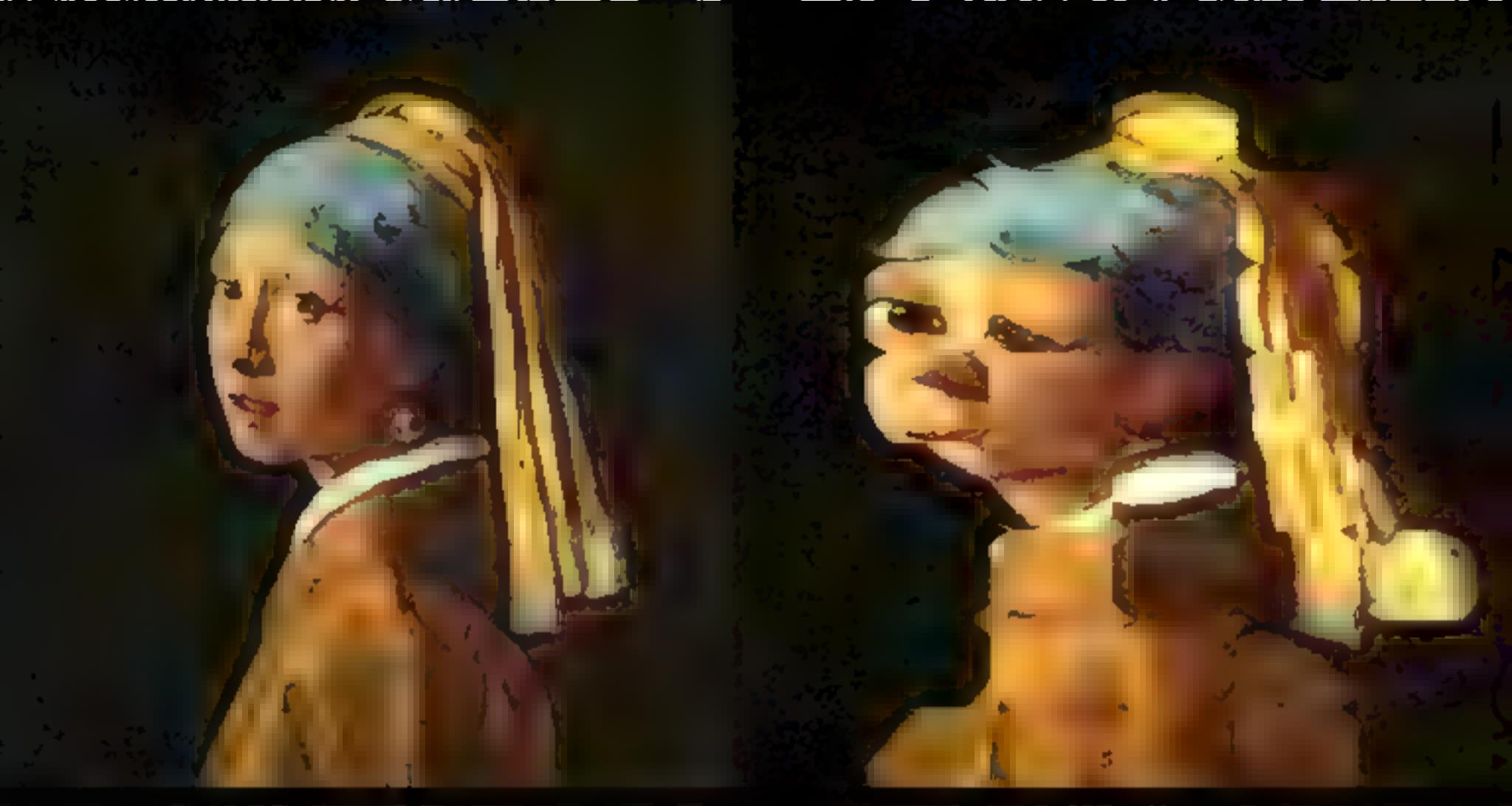


alone and with friends, on many occasions and stayed many hours each time. To underline my earlier point, words fall oddly short of describing the experience of actually being there.

A dark, atmospheric scene featuring several glowing celestial bodies of various sizes and colors (yellow, red, blue) floating in a dark space. The background is a dark, textured surface.

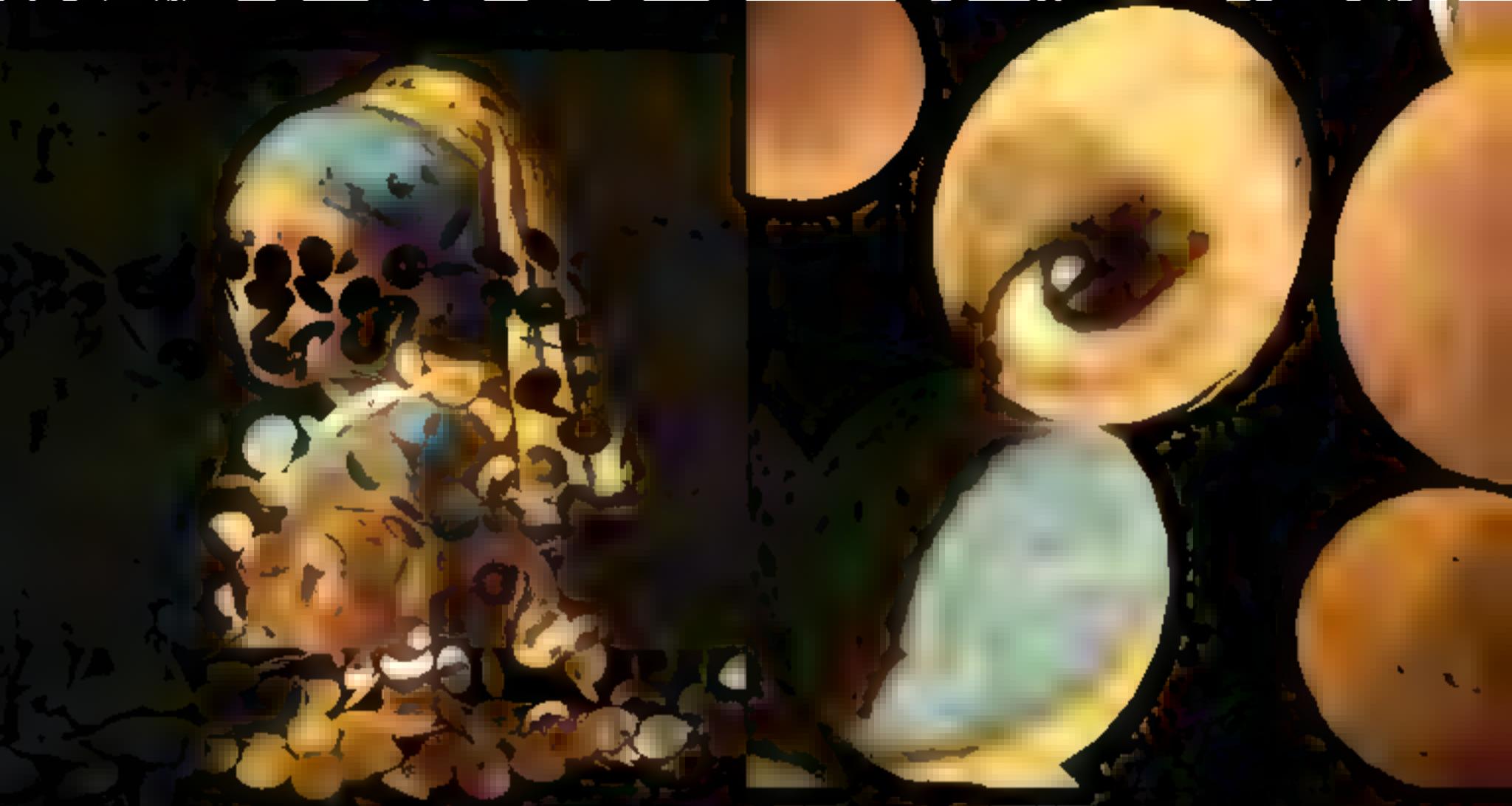
The same is true for Galilean Moons, which grew out of the idea of representing the motions of the moons of Jupiter. It is a dark space filled with celestial bodies of varying patterns, sizes and movements. Walking through, you pick up a few of these little moons and they orbit around you for awhile before they get tired of you and go do something else! Desdemona told me she incorporated "boredom logic" into their scripts, and Douglas wryly added the experience of walking through was rather like high school dating. I will say in defense of the temperamental little moons that they get bored with whatever else they're doing, and come back soon. OK, it is like high school dating, I guess.



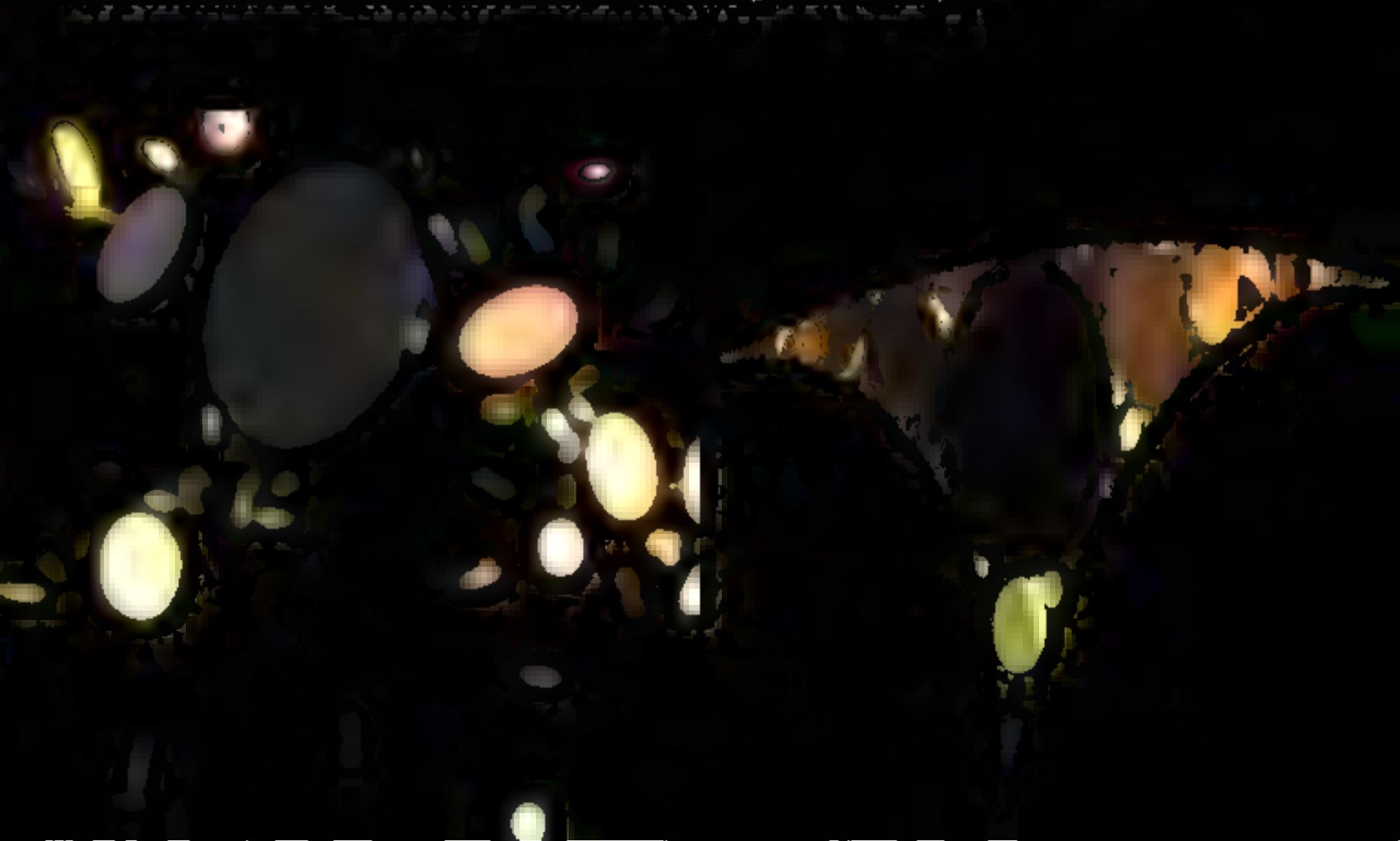


The final exhibit on my tour was "d.construct", a homage to the work of Leon Harmon, a cyberneticist, and one of the first computer artists ever. Harmon's work included photomosaics composed of smaller images creating a larger one, most famously the image of Abraham Lincoln from the five dollar bill. d.construct starts with masterpieces by Kandinsky, Renoir, Magritte, to name a few. In an interactive process, these





images get overlaid with ever-larger quasi-pixels that then fall to the floor as seeming waste. In the final step, these pieces of "waste" get resurrected to form a fractal, that then falls apart in much the same way that the pixelated overlay to the original image did. The fractals contain an element of randomness and never repeat exactly.



And all this raises the question what kind of a mind it takes to create installations like these. The creative partnership of Desdemona Enfield and Douglas Story is time-tested and stable, and revolves around compatible conversational styles and complimentary technical skills. Douglas brings his expertise in creating audiovisual effects, while Desdemona contributes her knowledge of analytical mathematics and experience creating interactive graphics software. Within the context of SL, which she regards as living in graph paper, these provide depth to her scripting skill.

While Douglas conceives audio-visual effects, Desdemona is dreaming up scripted simulations of processes in mathematics or physics. Sharing these ideas with each other, combining ideas in their imaginations, provides the seed from which the exhibits grow over hundreds of hours.

Because of my earlier thoughts on indigenous SL art, I had to ask what sets SL apart as a medium.

what sets SL apart as a medium. Like any other medium, SL presents a compromise. On one hand, it lacks texture and the tactile and textural cues present in RL art, made from glass, fiber, metal and wood. On the other hand, SL provides complete freedom to chose size, color, surface image and arrangement, without having to cope with cost, mass, gravity and inertia. Then again, running many scripts at the same time puts any and all of Doug and Desdemona's exhibits at risk of "sinking into a morass of lag and crashing," as Desdemona puts it. Finally, Desdemona tells me that "the ability of scripts to imbue SL objects with magical properties, allows a degree of interactivity that causes the visiting observer to become an integral part of the work of art".

Ah, yes. This response was what I have been waiting for since the beginning of summer. This is the essence of SL art, that can't transfer out of SL and into a Manhattan art gallery. This is the reason to produce and enjoy art here in SL.



Snowpaws

unique womens wear

Edward Kyomoon

“I Wanna Pick You Up”

by Traci Nubalo
photos by Jami Mills



Where does one begin? At the beginning, of course.

At our rez magazine staff meeting one night I happened to half-jokingly ask if anyone knew of any killer SL musicians who I might like to go see.

So Jami Mills pipes in: "Edward Kyomoon. He's playing tomorrow. Come with us."

You know Jami. She's one of the very best photographers in Second Life. She's clearly the most amazing artist of imagery that I have ever worked with - by far. She's been here with me for quite a few gigs now - each issue cooking up delectable eye candy to go with what we hope will be a good story. And in the process of becoming the musical eyes and ears (by proxy) for concert lovers across the artistic grid, we have become friends.

So just about 24 hours later, Jami introduced me to the wild ride of Ed Kyomoon.

My first impression was that it was a great crowd at Sweet Whispers. It was inspiring to see so many SL music lovers gathering for the concert when so many deserving performers and venues are catching light crowds of late. Then I noticed that many of the fans seemed to know one another. They seemed to have done this before. This, I realized, is Ed's core group of fans - the ones who show up for almost every show.

Sweet Whispers just celebrated its first anniversary in Second Life. It's a lovely outdoor venue with plenty of room and excellent sightlines to the stage. In speaking with Isabelle Brucato, who co-owns the room with Jessica Gabardini, I learned that they work very hard to make Sweet Whispers the "place to be" for quality live music. One of the strategies

they have successfully employed is to strive to have the best SL artists available to play the room regularly. And this is Ed Kyomoon's regular night. (In future visits I was to learn that Sweet Whispers is becoming a "place to be" for SL musicians and others working in the business).

The gunslinger appears right on time, and he MUST have gotten the memo: black tee shirt; black jeans; black hair grown into a long bang over his left eye; black shoes; black Fender Stratocaster ("with custom black pick guard and knobs," he would later clarify); grim game face. This guy is ready to kill. He has that elusive aura of a man who intends to take no prisoners. Not tonight.

As his avatar moves through the venue and arrives at the stage, Donn DeVore (he is Ed Kyomoon in Second Life and Donn DeVore everywhere else!) appears in real-time on the huge video screen provided by Kyomoon's production team. For the next hour we joined the packed house and just

flat-out partied! Watching Ed's intensity on the live-feed screen caught and held my fascination and attention for the entire hour. I'm a very big fan of the relatively new process of artistically merging RL and SL via interactive real time broadcasting of gigs. I regard this as a huge leap forward for all involved, especially the listener/viewer. So I asked him:

Traci Nubalo: My readers really enjoy some technical discussion. Can we open this interview with some 'Tech Talk'? I'd like to discuss the vidscreen a bit.

Edward Kyomoon: Sure. I'm an audio engineer in RL, so the technical is fun for me.

TN: To me, the realtime video screen is a major development. It brings you (and your avatar) right into my living room.

EK: I use Quicktime Broadcaster, a free Apple app, to capture the live video and send it to a relay server that sends it to the viewers, using the built-in iSight cam on a 2007 Macbook Pro.

TN: You are one of only several in



live SL music who uses this new technology. I wonder why so few?

EK: I've seen a few other people use video in SL. I think I might be the only one that uses it at nearly every show now.

TN: *I agree.*

TN: *CraigLyons Writer was the first that I saw using the real life hookup, I think.*

EK: Yeah, I saw Craig using it as well. He had different cameras he could switch between.

TN: *Yes. He also used the vidscreen*

to very successfully demonstrate his loop pedal stuff - building the song structure by using looped layers of sound. I liked that guy's performances a lot. I've also covered Tone Uriza when he used his screen. You know, the fabulous SL blues guitarist.

EK: Oh yeah. I know Tone. Also Anek Fuchs does video, too. Great guitar player.

TN: *Yes, he is. If I'm not mistaken, I think that Anek is in on the tech aspect of vidscreening as well. It*

really is a great development though and I'm glad to see you using it.

EK: Since my decision to use it, I've added colored lights, backdrops. I used to use lava lamps close to the cam so they looked huge!

TN: *Really? Too funny.*

EK: Yes. They were framing the scene - blue lava lamps?

TN: *LMAO. Yes, I love it. The whole realtime video thing is very cool for the viewer. It really adds another dimension to the SL experience.*

TN: *Awesome. Moving on - you play a black Stratocaster guitar?*

EK: Yes, my main guitar is a Fender Standard Stratocaster HSS. I customized it a bit with black pickguard and knobs, and had new frets put on it. It needs a new bridge now, because I play the thing so much.

TN: **smile* It is awesome-looking.*

EK: My acoustic is a Taylor 110. Simple guitar, no pickup or built in mic. I use a stereo mic setup for that.

TN: *With the strat - what sort of*



I had asked Jami to try to catch a shot of Edward Kyotoon, the poster Ed, the avatar Ed and realtime Ed all in one shot. I think it turned out pretty well.

rig are you using?

EK: The electric guitars use a Line 6 POD for all amp sounds. It lets me switch between lots of different sounds and amps, effects, etc. And I use a Boss Phaser effect pedal a LOT. Hehe, probably too much!



rd on his realtime vidcreen. After an evening performance at The Roof, NYC, I love how she got at once, with the Statue of Liberty thrown in. Thanks to Lingual Markus."

TN: *Does the Boss have the cry-baby effect as well?*

EK: Yes, it's like an auto-wah effect. A sweeping sound.



One of several truly amazing features of his live performance is his slide guitar work. I have seen and heard some amazing slide players: Ry Cooder, David Lindley, Duane Allman, Max Lasser, I could go on and on and never break the surface. But Kyomoon takes all of those styles and puts them to-

gether and adds a bunch of “nasty” to the mix. And when he stalks onto the stage, he carries that swagger with him; it’s an abiding sense of authority and confidence that he demonstrates night after night.

Opening with “She Sets Me Free,” he laid that hot metal slide onto the steel strings and coaxed and wrenched perfectly unearthly sounds from the Fender, song after song. Along the way, he adroitly covered Tom Petty, doing a commanding version of “Listen To Your Heart”. He also treated us to one of my all-time favorite songs when he swung into a fascinating and musically-powerful rendition of “Romeo and Juliet” by the great Mark Knopfler. He opens with a tonally sweet echoed electric guitar to which he adds some soft, conversational, almost-spoken-word lyrics to further sweeten an already excellent performance. His intelligence and openness (as both artist and man) allows him to read this one almost perfectly: passion and romance.

Despite such stellar covers at his fingertips, the focus of his live set seems to be his original material. And rightly so. Tonight, Ed featured some more downright skuzzy sounding guitar on “I Miss You So Much I Go Crazy”. The beginning of this clever tune also reminds me of Dire Straits, until he starts blazing with intensity and frenzy (and a tone so wicked that I had the urge to excuse myself and go wash my hands). All musical hell broke out during the fast-paced mid-break when he put the figurative (and literal, eventually) pedal to the metal. Everyone I was chatting with (yes, sometimes I do shop-talk during a set) was literally blown away at this point. This was the moment when I recall having the thought: “This is the real fucking deal.” I was convinced; I had become a Kyomoonie. I was to notice in the nights ahead that I would enjoy these songs even more on the second or third concert listen.

The 38-year-old from “somewhere outside of Seattle” dis-

played prodigious prowess on standard (non-slide electric) on another smooth original entitled "I Wanna Know". I'm thinking that this must be a fan favorite, based on audience response to this, my first listen. Everyone in the room just beams and wiggles and flat-out rocks this one top to bottom.

"Wanna pick you up...
Wanna take you out...
Wanna take you home...
Wanna taste your skin...
Wanna be your sin...
Wanna know your name."

This is radical, raw, cutting edge power rock with hook-laden lyrics that any songwriter would die for.

Looking around, watching the avatars spinning in their ecstatic connection, I feel my spirit released and enlivened; and if there's a better way for human men and women to spend their free time, I don't yet know what it is.



Like any good, solid musical performer, Ed has found himself in the midst of a fascinating group of supporters and friends to help him along the way. It's even become a family affair. His SL wife, Zoey Farstrider, takes the role of #1 fan and fulfills it perfectly. One of the things she does best is to flash the current lyrics into Open Chat, making the original material, especially, more accessible to the newcomer and more exciting overall. Edwards' RL mom, known as Foxxie Fang here in SL, makes the appearance at most shows ("as long as it's not too late", she mentioned in one IM to me), helping with the vid screen. In fact, when I was having trouble getting the image up at one show, it was Foxxie who kindly took the time to talk me through the process of reinstalling the current version of Quicktime, a process which took all of four minutes and did the trick perfectly. Thanks, Mom!

In the middle of my time hanging with the team at Ed's SL concerts while writing this piece, a major piece of SL music news sweeps through the camp: longtime Kyomoon personal manager Carol Greenwood has stepped down. Information begins to circulate that the team will announce that Sher Salmson's crack management team, SpiritFire Management, has taken the booking/management helm. Arguably one of the most powerful figures on the gridwide live music scene, Sher and I go back a long way in SL music, so I had a chat with her about the acquisition.

Traci Nubalo: Hi Sher. Congratulations on signing Ed Kyomoon to SpiritFire. I think it's a master stroke for both of you.

Sher Salmson: Thank you, Traci. I can tell you - I am thrilled.
smile

TN: In my opinion, this is a major SL music story: "market leader joins forces with market leader."

SS: I know without a doubt that Ed is a professional, which pleases me to no end. Not only is he a

great talent but he knows how to enhance his appeal through his professionalism. I'll let you in on a secret, too. You know that I rarely get to go to concerts outside the artists on our SpiritFire roster, simply because of time restraints. But when I did have the time, Ed is one that I would always try to go see. I would go to his concerts. The energy at his concerts is exceptional and always energized me!

TN: This a perfect match, then. Okay, Sher - myself and rez congratulate you!

Next, I grabbed Kyomoon personally and discussed the move with him:

Traci Nubalo: Congratulations, Ed!

Edward Kyomoon: Thanks, Traci! I'm really excited about going to the SpiritFire group. It seems like the best thing to do. I was on my own for a couple of weeks. Not fun.

TN: It's a master stroke, Ed. You could not have chosen better. And perfect that this breaks during my article. I'm doing a rewrite to in-

clude this.

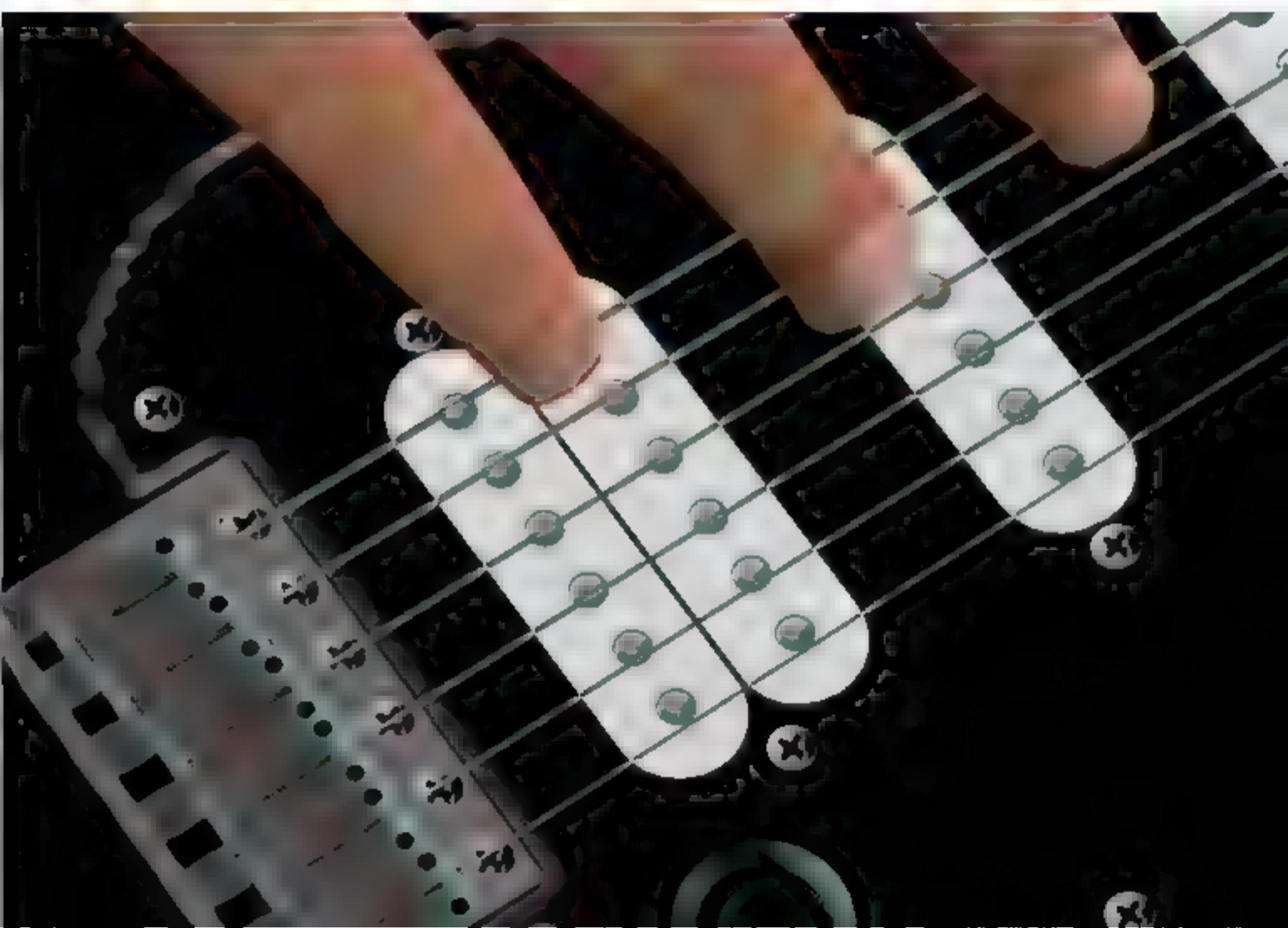
EK: Well, I was always happy working with Carol Greenwood. But this move is to a new level entirely. Also, I know most every other musician on the team, too. I was Allister's [Westland] best man in SL years ago. I stayed at Gina [Stella] and Anek's [Fuchs] in RL when I was in Chicago in 2010.

TN: *What do you expect SpiritFire can do for you that will be growth-oriented?*

EK: I hope that working with them will get my gig calendar full again and give me access to more venues. I'm playing about ten per week now, and I'd like to play at least twelve. 12 -15 live shows is a good week for me if I can keep up. My face hurts after a few nights; my fingers bleed...

TN: *SpiritFire Entertainment is top of the line, Ed, both as managers and as people.*

EK: Yeah, I feel very comfortable with them. It's all very exciting.



The move to Spritifire, however, marks the entry of the artist into the top realms of the SL entertainment scene. I knew Sher (and wrote about her and her performers) back in the days when she was doing everything but selling AcousticEnergy Nitely music from the trunk of her virtual car! Now her roster still carries the always-amazing AE, plus the incredible talent of a strong list of artists, including: Allister Westland, Anek Fuchs, Gina Stella, and the powerfully original singer-songwriter, Quantamis Navanath (who will be featured in the January issue of this magazine).

And Ed Kyomoon.



Since seeing the show last time, I had been pondering what it is that makes this artist's concert set so very enjoyable to see and hear (and feel!). There are obviously several factors which are common to most successful acts in either world: excellent

singing/playing ability, compositional abilities, astute song selection at concerts, ease of communication with the audience, strong technical prowess, etc. Leave out one of these factors and your band may very quickly find itself playing Saturday mornings at an empty inworld garden center, or performing on a multiple bill on-stage at the slave market on Gor.

Then it hit me! There's a deeper level to this creative story than audiences in SL ever get to see - and never should: long before any other set of ears have heard it - maybe even before the song is finished - our guy is in his studio laboring long and hard; sweating out grueling, meticulous hours to create tracks which will eventually give the song not only its heart: drums, bass and rhythm guitars, but also its soul: lead guitars, backing vocals, effects, etc. This is where Kyomoon shines. These tracks - so lovingly nurtured in the studio - polished until the magic is revealed. And it's this enchantment that gives the guitarist a musical backing



that can not only stand up to but enhance his incredible live skills. In other words, his live "band" is him. And when recorded and performed with artistry, it becomes just that: the total package from Ed Kyomoon is an art form unique to himself.

Traci Nubalo: So, yes. You have a studio background?

Edward Kyomoon: Yes, I studied music and audio in college in the early 90s, and then worked as a live sound tech for a few years in Houston where I grew up. Then I moved to Seattle to pursue a

career in the recording industry, which I've been doing since 1998 here.

TN: What kind of recording are you doing?

EK: Everything you can think of: rock bands, jazz, classical, voice-overs, TV ads, radio spots, demos, major label bands, bluegrass, too many to list.

TN: Awesome.

EK: Eventually I became the owner of a very large studio and ran that for a few years. I've made thousands of records with thousands of musicians. It's become

second nature to me. When you are in a studio 30 days a month, 12-16 hours a day, you get good at it.

TN: Your studio background really is evident in your backing tracks. Do you produce/engineer your live backing tracks?

EK: Yes, I use Logic Pro 8 and Protools software for composing and recording all my backing tracks for originals songs and many of the cover songs, although there are many well-produced backing tracks available online.

TN: Your backing tracks are (in my opinion) one of the keys to your live SL set, Ed. I think they are so well produced that they free you to perform live. They augment your show, not get in the way.

EK: Yes, I started out just playing acoustic guitar, no tracks. Simple setup. I'm always trying to make it sound better. I try to blend the tracks with my live vocal mic and guitar to make it sound like a band. Sometimes it's tricky - mixing while playing and singing, but I get bored easy, I guess.

Back in the world of live music, the tour has stopped by for an evening at Key West Resort and Marina, one of SL's musical mainstays. Liz Harley, the vivacious owner of Key West, has been personally greeting every single avatar who has walked through the door since July, 2007. It's one of those venues that is loved equally by audiences and musicians. The room sits outdoors right on the water and it has that laid-back "beach club" vibe that we all love so much.

I'm sitting here pretty well stunned by a wonderfully orchestrated live version of Ed's amazing original "Twilight's Sparkle". I find myself so deeply absorbed into the layers of sound that I have moments where it all fits together precisely. Like an audio satori. Later (when thinking re-establishes itself), I realize that this was caused by the precision of the recording, arranging, and live playing (excellent slide guitar, again); everything perfect in

itself. "Sparkle" could very well be used effectively for a film score. I hope that Ed is able to pursue this lucrative avenue.

[Hours before handing in my final version of this article Kyomoon hit the stage with a more recent version of "Twilight's Sparkle," complete with supporting vocalizations from the "My Little Pony" cartoon series of which he seems to be a major fan. It's amazingly cute, musically valid and clearly a step in the cinematic direction.]

Truth be told, I found it very difficult to review only a few of his originals in this piece. I wanted to write about all of them. (An earlier incarnation of this article was actually a lot more tune-heavy, but weighed in at an onerous 5,000 words!)

Tonight's set also featured a surprise (for me, anyway)! Out of his pocket Edward pulls the opening notes of "Black Magic Woman", which most of us ~ myself included ~ assumed was written by Carlos Santana. Ed will quickly

correct you in that endearing rockstar way he has about himself that it was penned by Peter Green of early Fleetwood Mac fame. He then proceeds to burn the house down with it.

After about 15 live shows on the virtual road with Ed Kyomoon, I reluctantly decided that my career demanded that I move on. I told one friend that I could happily rewrite this article using all of the new info that I gathered just in the last few shows. But everything moves forward...

It's great when the tale finishes with everyone so happy. Jami is happy; Ed Kyomoon makes a positive career move; Sher Salmson lands another top group for her roster; SL music fans will get to see more of this great act live; and my editor will be thrilled that I am finally turning this article in.

So, where do I end this? At the end, of course.

Merry Christmas and



from Bella in - Beautiful You

Christmas comes just once a year, but it can be celebrated in hundreds of different ways. When the big day arrives at last, make the most of it by mixing time-honored traditions with novel ways of sharing the holiday with family and friends. Dress up and celebrate the good things in life.

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The Girl Opines

It's a Wonderful Life

Jullianna Juliesse!!!!

Call me naïve, but I have a wee little blonde axe to grind as 2011 draws to a close

Time and again, I tend to judge people using my own quiet standards and have found that so many times I wind up sorely disappointed. It's happened to me in real life, and it seems to occur even more frequently in Second Life. If you are perusing this piece expecting a blow-by-blow account of Grand Guignol proportions describing all the sordid details, you can flip the page now. I certainly ain't going there, and our gracious advertisers will appreciate your taking the time to view their placements in this month's issue—or even better to visit them inworld.

Nonetheless, at its most harmless, I've seen idle gossip and come-and-go friends in this place. I've been friended and defriended in 24-hour periods of time. I've learned to brush this sort of thing aside. But at its most pernicious, I've also witnessed enough rumor-mongering, backstabbing, forged notecards, outright bullying, and all the rest—both personally and among friends—for it to warrant some consideration.

So, what gives? I have a couple of theories.



It's so easy to push the envelope of bad behavior while hiding behind a computer screen, or multiple avatars.

First, the whole issue of accountability. It's so easy, and very tempting, to push the envelope of bad behavior while hiding behind a computer screen, or multiple avatars. The Holy Lindens' Terms of Service only take into account the most egregious violations, and really do very little to prevent some of the more subtle insidious behavior that takes place in SL. There simply are not the same kinds of consequences in this place for irresponsible, hateful, and idiotic behavior that one would encounter in real life. Plain and simple.

And at the end of the day, what remains? I've chosen to ignore it and realized I'm one lucky girl, in both of the worlds through which I wander. Rather than dwelling on the negatives, I've been fortunate to find some of the most caring, talented, brilliant, funny, and compassionate friends a girl could ever hope for. I have seen my creativity flourish through spending time here. My real life has flowered in ways I never thought possible.

So, instead of ranting about the bad things that happen here, I will let this month's column stand as my holiday card to you all.

Just step over the proverbial shit piles, keep smiling, and listen for those holiday bells. They're there. I promise.

And remember, Zuzu, "Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings." It really is a wonderful life.

Happy Christmas and love from,
Julie

A large, handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Julie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "J" on the left and a horizontal line extending from the "E" on the right.

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A

A photograph of a bridge with a repeating geometric pattern of black and white diagonal lines.

Photography
Jami Mills

Plan B

The Power of the Not So Silent Majority

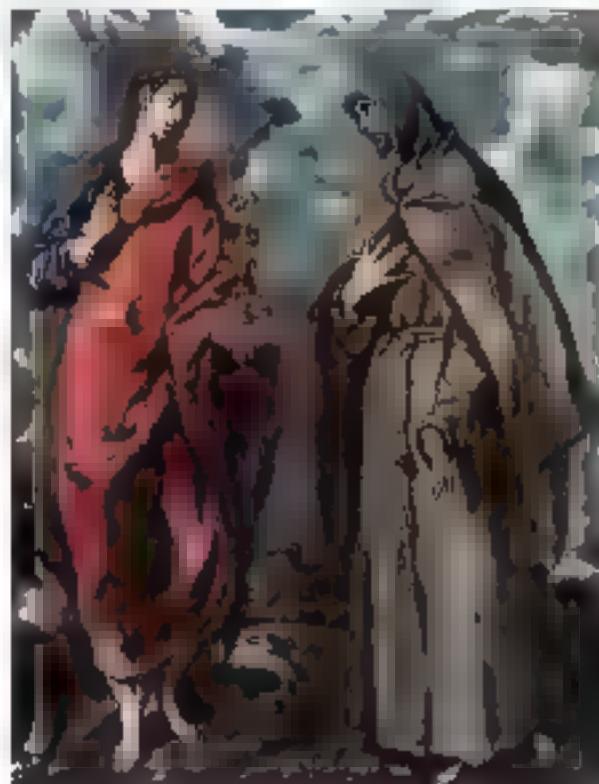
Deningun Parte

In an earlier column, I remember calling SL the great social laboratory. I did that because here we have the freedom to be whomever and whatever we want to be, in theory. In theory, I have the choice of gender, race, whether I am human or not, my size, hair color, eyes, style of clothing, all aspects of my outward presentation. As I said, in theory.

In practice, I can exercise my choices, but I am immediately faced with societal conventions and pressures. Hold on! We have that here, in the freest world possible? Let's take stock for a moment, look around us, and see what the cultural mainstream in SL looks like.

For obvious reasons, I am more sensitive to how the cultural norms play out for women, so let's look at women first. What I see is an abundance of very feminine women wearing gowns in all kinds of contexts, a disproportionate number of redheads, an overabundance of (often exaggerated) green eyes, and impossibly high heels. Maybe I am more in tune with women, but I claim to not be blind to men either. And what strikes me here are the exaggerated muscles, the insistence on dark action-hero like looks, the oh-so-cool shades, and the posturing that often looks as though the gentlemen have razor blades in their armpits.

And then, of course, there are the things that apply to both sexes. I remember coming to SL, trying a number of shapes, finding them strangely tall and thin, and being repelled by this kind of physique. I wanted to be a bit taller than average, and somewhat athletic and curvy - not a long stick. And I remember feeling so proud of myself when my first avatar shape came in within a centimeter of my RL height. But that joy was short lived, because I actually wound up being very short by SL standards. I accepted size as arbitrary and fancied that most everybody must have thought like me, wanting to be a bit taller than average. And by doing so, I figured that over time the average must have shifted, so that now everyone is really tall as measured in centimeters. Maybe height in SL is inflationary? I'm not sure this explanation is true, but it might as well be. I liked my proportions as they were, and accepted that being taller would throw everything off, and stayed as I was for a while - the short one in every crowd. I did eventually succumb and grew, and my proportions went off. Where before I was athletic, curvy, compact and downright Rubenesque by SL standards, I now was as overstretched as everyone else. Sigh. I mostly got over it, except now I feel as if I have wandered into an El Greco painting, a realm where everyone is tall and thin.



But the controversy rages on - realistic size versus conventional size. The waters are even more muddled by those who feel the need come up with a height cutoff for "child" avatars. From reading profiles, I figure some short and slim avatars have run into trouble as being identified as a child in SL - here again we run into the power of societal convention. To be seen and treated as an adult, it seems you need to have the exaggerated physique that is the SL cultural norm.

some short and slim avatars have run into trouble as being identified as a **child** in SL

But the pressure does not end here. I admit my beauty **ideal** may be far from typical, but it brings with it a few pitfalls. I cultivate a somewhat androgynous, tomboyish style, and I am one of the relatively few dark avatars around. I have heard it said that dark skin makes social life really difficult in SL, though I have never experienced that effect, however, the one factor that does complicate my life from time to time is my choice of clothing. One occasion was funny... in a good way. I went dancing in a blues joint, hair cut short, wearing men's flannel pants, white shirt, tie, vest and a fedora. I was promptly taken for a man by the DJ, who had missed a few other cues, like my err "most prominent assets" and high heels.

Others were downright annoying. When formal clothing is requested, I have a habit of showing up in a tuxedo, reckoning a tux must be formal enough for just about anything. And I do not trip over floor-length skirts either. But somehow people have difficulty with this choice of mine. I was ejected from 1920s Berlin for wearing a period correct tux and have been asked to leave ballrooms on more than one occasion. Strangely enough though, it is mostly

women who impose this pressure. If anything, men seem to be drawn to me precisely for my gender-bending and disregard of convention. Anyone riddle me that please?

I have another observation, this time regarding hair. An acquaintance of mine was asked to be a redhead for a day, and to wear colorful clothing while she was at it. When the day was over, she found it difficult to revert to her original dark hair, because people had liked her as a redhead, and soon the red hair became a stereotype: "Dear, but you **are** a redhead!", people would say, never mind that my friend felt quite differently about it. Reverting to her original color became an ongoing battle, more so because as my friend herself will admit, the red hair looked good on her. And not only that, now she is plagued by men who ask to see her RL pictures and - if possible - on cam to verify that she is a true redhead in both her lives. And while they are at it, they ask her RL age by way of greeting. It goes like this:

"May I ask how old you are in RL? Younger women get on my nerves. If you are anything over 40 we could be an item." Next is the question of time zone, voice chat, sexual interest. My friend says as if they have a checklist in front of them marking off the various items. Mind you, this happens well before my friend has said any more than a friendly hello.

Another friend was unhappy with her fairly stereotypical beach blond looks. Tan skin, very fair hair, eyes blue enough to stop traffic. Not only that, but her original avatar was a fairly popular package and she got tired of seeing her face on others more or less daily. So, she bit the bullet and spent some money on a new skin, hair, eyes that were more in line with what she liked. She did not find her look all at once, and over a period of two or three weeks she morphed

from day to day, before settling on darker but still blond hair, very light skin and blue-gray eyes. While her finding her appearance was a transition that took time and happened in stages, her social life changed abruptly. As soon as she was no longer the stereotypical blond, her social circles dropped my friend like a hot potato, receding from her, IMs going unanswered. That make-over literally changed my friend's entire life.

While her finding her appearance was a transition ... her **social life** changed abruptly

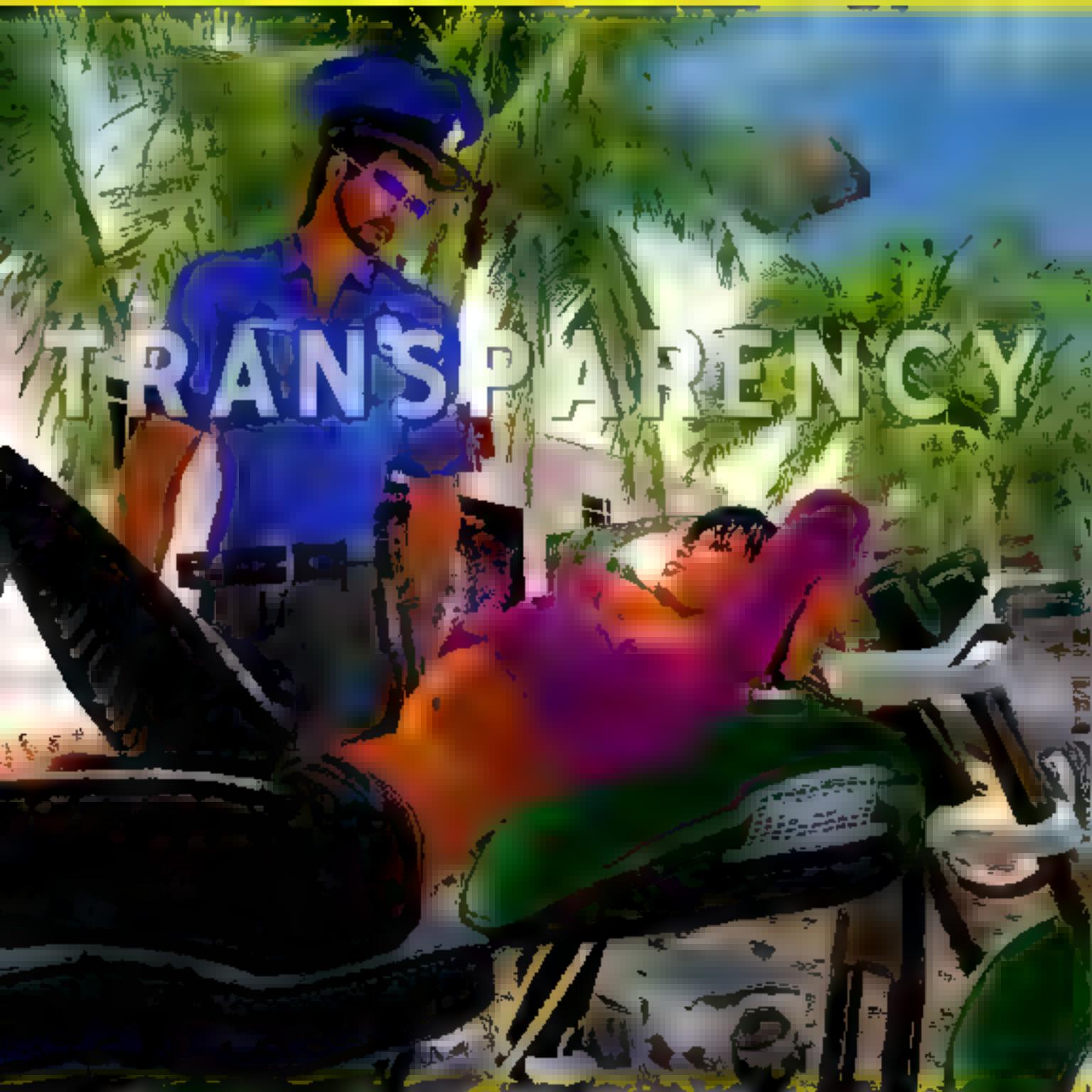
So, maybe there is something to the perception that ethnicity matters in SL and being dark reduces social interaction. Then again, it seems my friends are a kind of projection screen for the desires, prejudices and fears of those whose attention they caught. That is not a comfortable place to be, either. Essentially, it means people value not you, but the perception they have of you, the thing they think you should be in their imagination. And you pop these bubbles at your own risk.

So, is complying with SL beauty standards really a social advantage? You be the judge of it. Who thought finding your identity was this difficult anyway?



CAT'S BEACH GALLERY

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Open Government

"You can't dress like that here, ma'am"

I couldn't stand the sight of him. Another pair of discount Foster Grants pressing hard against my face was too much to handle. Another perfectly trimmed Miami Vice beard. . if it could be called a beard. No ... this was stubble. No two hairs touching. I hated him

"Excuse me, officer?"

"There are plenty of other areas that will tolerate this sort of... display"

"What are you talking about?"

"You can't dress like that here"

Who was he to discuss wardrobes? This little pissant... with his swollen forearms... smeared with dollar-store ink... badly executed Celtic gibberish and bands of barbed wire that would have seemed cliche fifteen years ago...

"Am I offending you, officer?"

"Not at all ma'am But I can't speak for everyone else here. There are some folks that would find your outfit offensive. I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you to leave"

"Why don't I just throw something on top of this..."

"I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you to leave."

"Hang on.... this won't take long"

"Ma'am... I'm going to have to ask you to leave."

"Are you in some sort of position of authority? I'm gonna need to see

your badge"

"My badge is right here on my chest"

He was right. His badge was right there on his chest His enormous chest Puffed out like Bresson chicken. and seething with the unbridled pride of a hall monitor on his first shift .

"So it is! Shiny, isn't it?"

"Ma'am, I'm not going to ask you again"

"I'm sorry. what was the question?"

"It's time for you to leave Now, you can leave by your own free will, or I can assist you"

"Are you threatening me, young man?"

I don't respond well to authority I suppose no one really responds well to authority . but most people have the capacity to at least REACT well . or react reasonably . or react maturely to authority I tend to get a little . precocious. Or something

"Ma'am, I'm not going to ask again"

"I would like to speak with your supervisor," I said as I dismounted my motorcycle with the grace of a drunken walrus. As I steadied myself on my own hind legs, I suddenly became hyper aware of my braless ness I have a fair bit of square footage going on north of

the Mason-Dixon Line... and I'm certainly at the age where a little support could go a long way... but I have just never felt right about strapping myself in like I'm on an Apollo mission. But this was a cold morning and some foreign-spun fabrics can be a little less opaque than our domestic counterparts. So perhaps I did appear to be suitable for storage if someone wanted to hang up a coat... or a hat

"Ma'am? Please..."

I looked down at my pendulous chest. And then back into the Foster Grants.

"So you're saying that this is not a leash-free park..."

Barney Fife tried unsuccessfully to control his dimples.

"That's correct, ma'am. And there has been a complaint. From a parent"

"Apparent?"

"A... parent. Yes ma'am."

"There's a problem with my thread-count," I arched my back ever so slightly, "I don't believe I've ever been ejected from a region for this reason."

"Ma'am."

"Alright. Fine. You win, Krupke."

I was willing to retreat. I was enthusiastic, even. It was now time for me to do my bit to help preserve the sort of morality that we have all come to expect. Far be it for me to

poison the drinking water with my filthy protrusions. It is a far, far better thing that I do... than I have ever done...."

"Thank you, ma'am. I'm glad you understand where I'm coming from."

"Unsightly protrusions can be lead to all sorts of corruptions."

"Yes ma'am."

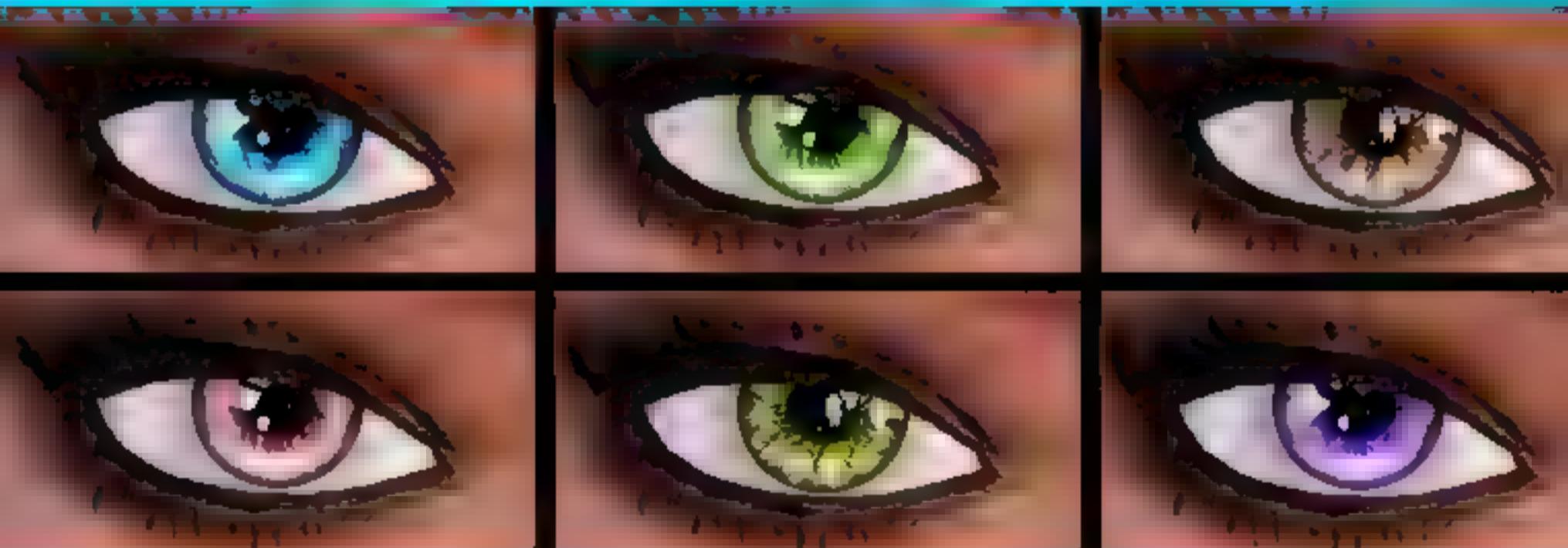
And there was nothing more unsightly than his own protrusion.

"You wanna get a drink or something?" I asked as I tried to rez my bike...



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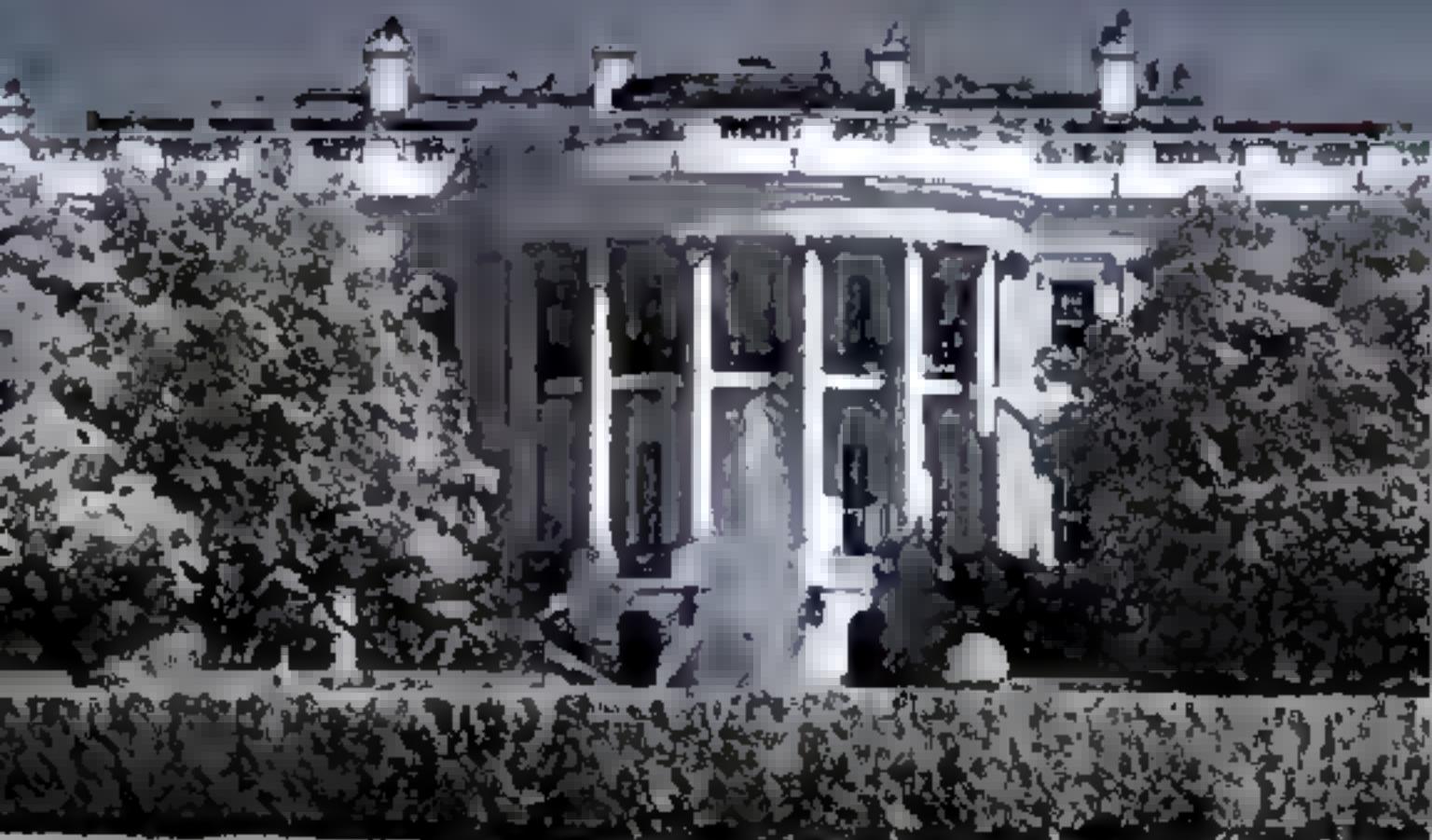


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BRAVO RAED



by Jami Mills

Lincoln Hayes sat ramrod straight in his leather chair, his aide appearing suddenly at the door, looking as if he'd seen a ghost. "We're in Bravo Red lockdown, sir. You're needed in the Situation Room at once." "Are you shitting me??" Something gripped his throat. Blood rushed to his head, his temples pounded. "This doesn't happen, not today. Not fucking today," he thought. Sonsofbitches. "Mary. COFFEE!" He sprang to his feet and grabbed a pad and his cigar. "Cancel Andersen . and call my wife and tell her I won't be home tonight." "Ashley, I'm afraid you'll need to stay here," motioning to his eager intern, who had perked up with the commotion. His loyal secretary, Mary, handed him his coffee, black, in his favorite mug. He took one long pull and set it down. "Let's go." He threw on his jacket, straightened his tie, and strode purposefully down the hall. "Be quick, but don't hurry, kid. Tell me what you know."

He had a military bearing. Three tours in Iran will do that to you. Semper Fi. He walked with a noticeable limp, courtesy of six months at the Tehran Hilton. "Bravo Red," he muttered to himself. "Dammit... I

can count 'em on one hand over the past 75 years. Kennedy, 9/11, Tel Aviv. It had to be today, of all days." Phones ringing, murmuring voices, talking heads, all were amplified in his head. Crackling static. Pulsing colors. He looked over the office pool. "These poor bastards are about to have a very bad day." Lincoln ran through his mental checklist: Bravo Red, imminent nuclear threat, assassination of head of state, Homeland attack. His mind raced. What? Pakistan? New York? The President?

A group of school children were grouped in the rotunda, noisy and rambunctious. Wilkes Harrington had been his trusted aide for the past year, a family friend with an Ivy League pedigree, and the gray slacks and blue blazer to prove it. "The Chief is running late, as usual, but the rest of the team is there. NSA, CIA, Secretary Booth. They didn't tell me much else, sir." Wilkes didn't fluster. He wished he had a dozen like him. Time moved like molasses, every footstep sounded like a pounding hammer. The adrenaline was really starting to kick in now. Lincoln brushed past the Undersecretary of Commerce. "I can't now, Jake... In the morning."

He put his hand on Wilkes' shoulder. "Stay with me at all times, take down everything, bring me the Book and the NID, and any crisis support packages as soon as there's a break in the action. I want you to do the Sit Room Note, too. Make me proud." They ducked down a side hall to the elevator, past portraits of Jefferson and Madison along the mahogany-paneled walls. The doors of the cramped elevator opened and they stepped in, hitting the basement button. "Do you think we could move any slower? Jesus Christ!" The elevator opened to a nondescript hallway. "Sir, one minute" Wilkes knocked on the door to a conference room two doors up from the Situation Room "Sir, could you step in here for just a moment?" "Wilkes, not now." "You need to see this, sir"

Wilkes gave two loud knocks and slowly opened the door "SURPRISE!" Horns and noisemakers sounded off in unison as Lincoln stepped into the room. Smiles and laughter everywhere. Twenty some-odd people all shouted "Happy Birthday" at once. "You're all in big trouble! Were you in on this, Andy? Sonofabitch." A smile spread across his face as he saw

assembled before him the administration's best and brightest. He looked down at the cake. "Don't we have a country to run?" he asked. He walked over to Wilkes, who had a sly grin on his face, and threw his arm around his shoulder. "You got me, kid."

The oppressive Washington humidity had yielded to crisper air and the colors of Autumn, the leaves now succumbing to the frigid nights just before Thanksgiving. All but a few maples were now just sticks against the gray, Wyeth sky. A two-man scull sliced through the glass of the Potomac and disappeared under one of the arches of the Key Bridge. The day was remarkable in its ordinariness.

"Roll up your sleeve, sir. This is going to hurt you more than it is me," smiled the pretty nurse in her starched uniform. Lincoln didn't even notice the poke of the syringe in his arm. "Supposed to be a nasty flu season. You're smart to get your shot early, sir" He rolled down his sleeve and took a gulp of lukewarm coffee. "Thank you, darling. Mary COFFEE!" A stack of the day's briefing memos sat on his desk, next to

wo photographs, one of his wife and son, and a slightly smaller one of a smiling Abraham Denton, the forty eighth President of the United States.

He gazed momentarily at his wife, as he often did, recalling how her image pulled him through those bleakest of days. A needle in your arm is a damn sight better than one under your fingernail, he thought. He looked at the large, rusted key he kept near the photos. Not a day went by without Lincoln silently thanking God for his freedom. It could have ended so differently -- forget about his suffering.. he couldn't bear to think about the anguish his family must have endured during those desperate days in Tehran. Then he glanced at Abraham Denton. That was a helluva night, he mused. His re-election campaign had been nasty and brutal. Those sonsofbitches had absolutely no decency or shame. There's no depth they wouldn't stoop to. Got what they deserved, the bastards, he thought. It had been twenty years since a landslide of those proportions.

Lincoln broke out of his daydream when he heard the sounds of some-

ne running down the hall and an out-of-breath Wilkes burst into his office, ashen and visibly shaking. "It's Bravo Red, sir. Really," he stammered. One look at Wilkes and he didn't doubt him for an instant. "They got him. They shot Abe. The President has been assassinated."

In between meetings, Lincoln finally had a moment to himself, the first of the morning. Baseball season was just starting and it was unseasonably warm out. He gazed at his photographs and heaved a deep sigh. Life is suffering, a Buddhist saying he remembered. He couldn't bear to look at Abe's portrait, so he stared at his wife and son instead, the two most important people in this life. Always would be. Lincoln picked up his CIA briefing package -- "Top Secret Eyes Only" There was a quiet knock at the door and Mary walked in, carrying his favorite mug. "Good morning, Mr President. I brought you your coffee."

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You Shall Never Touch Me, Again

HeLo.

Please get your shit out of my basement.

Your mother's dishes, her silver,
The old scratched records you can no longer play

I am selling the family house this month.
Want it gone, all gone.

It's where you lived,
Took advantage of the good graces
Bestowed upon you,
By my mother,
Who trusted you blindly

She took you in,
Unconditionally

Yes, we watched
your mother
waste away from cancer,
helpless and unknowing, kids that we were.
Saint that she was.

You playing dirges on the organ
While she had last rites up in the mahogany death
room—

Doubly unfortunate your father dropped dead two
years later...

Broken heart stopped on the front stoop.
I examined the blood stains,
Curious and scared.

But Mummy and I took you in...
And as I grew, didn't I look so sweet?
Fourteen, I was.

Day after last day of school
I slept in late

Old pink satin nightie
Beatles albums playing .ove love me do

And you,
Showed up at the house.

Not sure what got into your head...

Beckoning
"Come to me," you said
"Make me feel good," you said

And it was wrong-
Wrong
wrong

My family's flesh,
and mine--
Betrayed, by you

And I,
I rocked, mute, on the aluminum and plastic swings,
The ones your father built
When I was three...

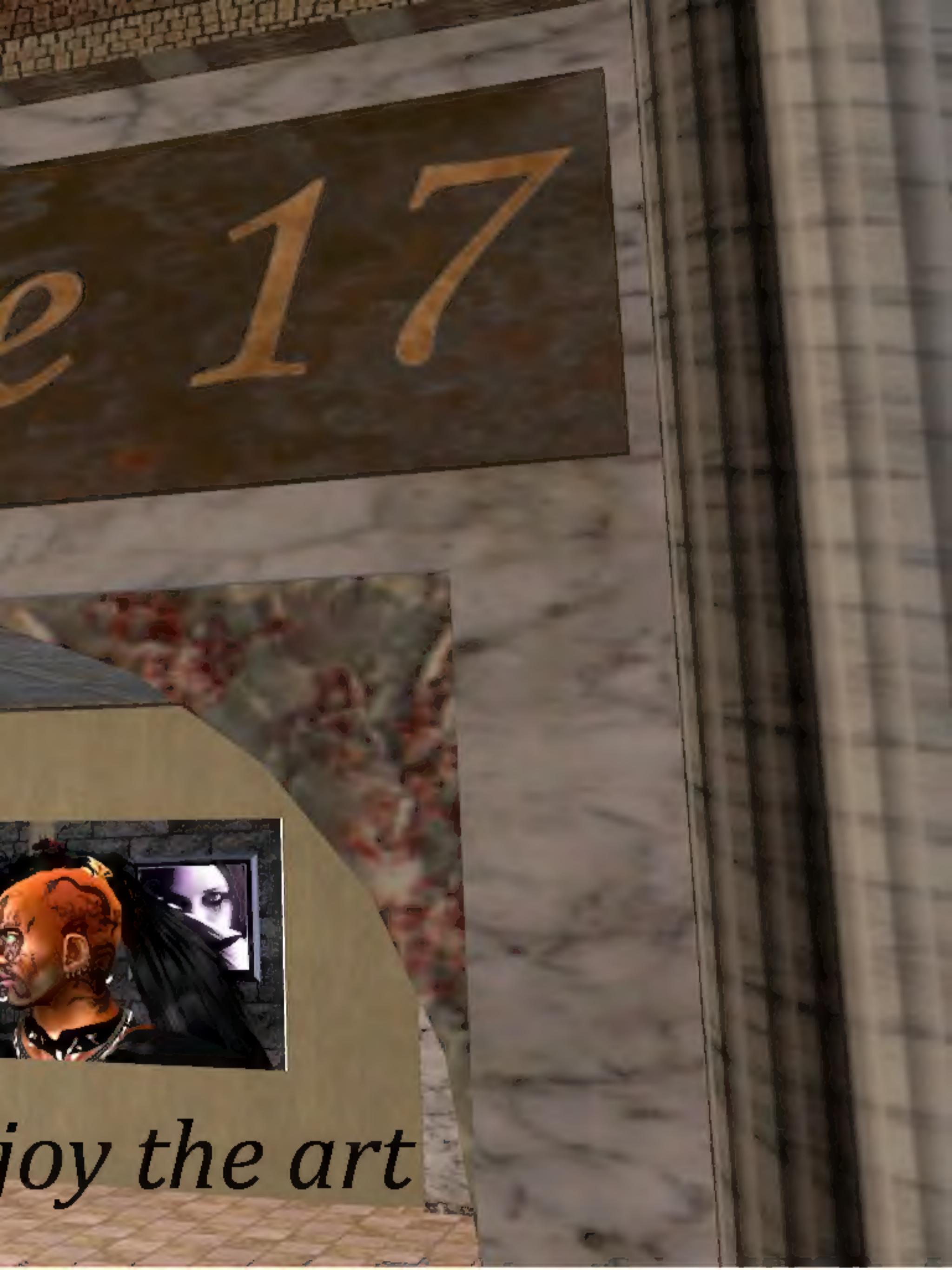
And never said a word
Until now.

Take your shit out of my basement.

Galéria



come and enj



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